

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTIONS

H.J.R. No. 63

A JOINT RESOLUTION

proposing a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to permit a county to issue bonds or notes to finance the development or redevelopment of an unproductive, underdeveloped, or blighted area and to pledge for repayment of the bonds or notes increases in ad valorem taxes imposed by the county on property in the area.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Legislature of the State of Texas:

SECTION 1. Section 1-g(b), Article VIII, Texas Constitution, is amended to read as follows:

(b) The legislature by general law may authorize an incorporated city or town *or a county* to issue bonds or notes to finance the development or redevelopment of an unproductive, underdeveloped, or blighted area within the city, ~~or~~ town, *or county* and to pledge for repayment of those bonds or notes increases in ad valorem tax revenues imposed on property in the area by the city, ~~or~~ town, *or county* and other political subdivisions.

SECTION 2. This proposed constitutional amendment shall be submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 8, 2011. The ballot shall be printed to permit voting for or against the proposition: "The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to permit a county to issue bonds or notes to finance the development or redevelopment of an unproductive, underdeveloped, or blighted area and to pledge for repayment of the bonds or notes increases in ad valorem taxes imposed by the county on property in the area. The amendment does not provide authority for increasing ad valorem tax rates."

Passed by the House on May 5, 2011: Yeas 133, Nays 11, 2 present, not voting; passed by the Senate on May 23, 2011: Yeas 28, Nays 3.

Filed with the Secretary of State May 26, 2011.

H.J.R. No. 109

A JOINT RESOLUTION

proposing a constitutional amendment to clarify references to the permanent school fund, to allow the General Land Office to distribute revenue derived from permanent school fund land or other properties to the available school fund, and to provide for an increase in the market value of the permanent school fund for the purpose of allowing increased distributions from the available school fund.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 49-b(h), Article III, Texas Constitution, is amended to read as follows:

(h) Lands purchased and comprising a part of the Veterans' Land Fund are declared to be held for a governmental purpose, but the individual purchasers of those lands shall be subject to taxation to the same extent and in the same manner as are purchasers of lands dedicated to the Permanent ~~Free Public~~ School Fund. The lands shall be sold to veterans in quantities, on terms, at prices, and at fixed, variable, floating, or other rates of interest, determined by the Board and in accordance with rules of the Board. Notwithstanding any provisions of this section to the contrary, lands in the Veterans' Land Fund that are offered for sale to veterans and that are not sold may be sold or resold to the purchasers in quantities, on terms, at prices, and at rates of interest determined by the Board and in accordance with rules of the Board.

SECTION 2. Sections 2 and 4, Article VII, Texas Constitution, are amended to read as follows:

Sec. 2. All funds, lands and other property heretofore set apart and appropriated for the support of public schools; all the alternate sections of land reserved by the State out of grants heretofore made or that may hereafter be made to railroads or other corporations of any nature whatsoever; one half of the public domain of the State; and all sums of money that may come to the State from the sale of any portion of the same, shall constitute a permanent ~~[perpetual public]~~ school fund.

Sec. 4. The lands herein set apart to the *Permanent* ~~[Public-Free]~~ School fund, shall be sold under such regulations, at such times, and on such terms as may be prescribed by law; and the Legislature shall not have power to grant any relief to purchasers thereof. The proceeds of such sales must be used to acquire other land for the *Permanent* ~~[Public-Free]~~ School fund as provided by law or the proceeds shall be invested by the comptroller of public accounts, as may be directed by the Board of Education herein provided for, in the bonds of the United States, the State of Texas, or counties in said State, or in such other securities, and under such restrictions as may be prescribed by law; and the State shall be responsible for all investments.

SECTION 3. Section 5, Article VII, Texas Constitution, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (g) to read as follows:

(a) The permanent school fund consists of all land appropriated for public schools by this constitution or the other laws of this state, other properties belonging to the permanent school fund, and all revenue derived from the land or other properties. The available school fund consists of the distributions made to it from the total return on all investment assets of the permanent school fund, the taxes authorized by this constitution or general law to be part of the available school fund, and appropriations made to the available school fund by the legislature. The total amount distributed from the permanent school fund to the available school fund:

(1) in each year of a state fiscal biennium must be an amount that is not more than six percent of the average of the market value of the permanent school fund, excluding real property belonging to the fund that is managed, sold, or acquired under Section 4 of this article, *but including discretionary real assets investments and cash in the state treasury derived from property belonging to the fund*, on the last day of each of the 16 state fiscal quarters preceding the regular session of the legislature that begins before that state fiscal biennium, in accordance with the rate adopted by:

(A) a vote of two-thirds of the total membership of the State Board of Education, taken before the regular session of the legislature convenes; or

(B) the legislature by general law or appropriation, if the State Board of Education does not adopt a rate as provided by Paragraph (A) of this subdivision; and

(2) over the 10-year period consisting of the current state fiscal year and the nine preceding state fiscal years may not exceed the total return on all investment assets of the permanent school fund over the same 10-year period.

(g) *Notwithstanding any other provision of this constitution or of a statute, the General Land Office or an entity other than the State Board of Education that has responsibility for the management of permanent school fund land or other properties may in its sole discretion distribute to the available school fund each year revenue derived during that year from the land or properties, not to exceed \$300 million each year.*

SECTION 4. The following temporary provision is added to the Texas Constitution:

TEMPORARY PROVISION. (a) *This temporary provision applies to the constitutional amendment proposed by H.J.R. No. 109, 82nd Legislature, Regular Session, 2011, providing for an increase in the market value of the permanent school fund for the purpose of allowing increased distributions from the available school fund.*

(b) *The change to Section 5(a), Article VII, of this constitution made by the amendment applies to a distribution from the permanent school fund to the available school fund made on or after September 1, 2011.*

(c) *This temporary provision expires December 1, 2015.*

SECTION 5. This proposed constitutional amendment shall be submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 8, 2011. The ballot shall be printed to provide for voting for or against the proposition: “The constitutional amendment clarifying references to the permanent school fund, allowing the General Land Office to distribute revenue from permanent school fund land or other properties to the available school fund to provide additional funding for public education, and providing for an increase in the market value of the permanent school fund for the purpose of allowing increased distributions from the available school fund.”

Filed with the Secretary of State May 27, 2011.

H.J.R. No. 130

A JOINT RESOLUTION

meeting requirements of the United States Department of Education concerning federal student aid by naming private institutions of higher education in the State of Texas that are authorized to operate educational programs beyond secondary education, including programs leading to a degree or certificate.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Legislature of the State of Texas:

WHEREAS, On October 29, 2010, the United States Department of Education released Final Regulations on Program Integrity Issues in an effort to strengthen federal student aid programs at postsecondary institutions; one provision seeks to clarify the minimum a state must do to authorize a postsecondary institution so that the institution is able to participate in federal student aid and other federal funding programs; and

WHEREAS, Specifically, 34 C.F.R. Section 600.9 was amended to require that postsecondary institutions be “established by name as an educational institution by a State through a charter, statute, constitutional provision, or other action” and that they be “authorized to operate educational programs beyond secondary education, including programs leading to a degree or certificate”; and

WHEREAS, Section 61.003, Texas Education Code, cites state universities by name and Section 61.063, Texas Education Code, establishes a process for naming public community colleges, but state law regards private institutions of higher education differently; and

WHEREAS, Rather than naming them, Section 61.003, Texas Education Code, defines “private or independent institutions of higher education” as those institutions organized under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act, now part of the Texas Business Organizations Code, that are exempt from taxation under Article VIII, Section 2, Texas Constitution, and Section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and that are accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, or the American Bar Association; and

WHEREAS, Such institutions are exempt from Section 61.301, Texas Education Code, which provides for the “regulation of private postsecondary educational institutions,” because they are accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board; and

WHEREAS, The state is home to many institutions covered by Section 61.003, Texas Education Code, some of which have educated students since the mid-1800s, and all of which have been in operation for at least 20 years; each is eligible to participate in one or more state-funded student financial aid programs subject to audit by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and those that participate in such programs provide student enrollment and graduation data to the coordinating board for accountability purposes; moreover, consumer complaints about the institutions can be made to the Office of the Attorney General, consumer protection division, and complaints concerning financial impropriety and ethical misconduct can be made to the Office of the Attorney General, charitable trust division; and

WHEREAS, The state’s private postsecondary educational institutions include: Abilene Christian University, Amberton University, Austin College, Baylor University, Baylor College of Medicine, the College of St. Thomas More, Concordia University Texas, Dallas Baptist